

THE  
JUDGMENT  
OF  
A good Subject  
UPON  
His Majesties  
LATE  
DECLARATION  
FOR  
*Indulgence of Tender Consciences.*



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# THE PUBLISHER to the READER.



His which I here present you is part of a Letter, which I receiv'd from a Friend, to whom I sent the late Declaration, and desir'd his judgment of it: The rest was of Matters in which you are not concern'd. 'Tis likely you will be inquisitive after his name; but 'pray remember the Boy of Bologna, who, being demanded what he carried in a Basket, reply'd suddenly, If my Mother would have had you known, she would not have cover'd it. I was desirous you should share in the satisfaction I found by reading it, and believ'd I had right to do what I thought fit with a Letter written to me: But, do not think I ought to publish the name of the Writer without his permission; which to tell you the truth, I never demanded out of fear he would have refus'd it, if for no other reason, yet for the cross temper of the Age, of which I have heard him often complain with much resentment, and truly I think with no less reason. For people are universally fixt in the persuasions they have taken up, sometimes from fancy, sometimes from chance; but generally, either from Education, or the Authority of some, whose Ability they esteem: And are so unalterably positive in them, that they seldom examine the Reasons of any thing, either said or written, but look upon the conclusion; and if that be agreeable to their affections, they like and praise all the rest; if it thwart them, let a Man bring as good proofs as Euclid, or whoever is of most unquestion'd Authority, yet all shall be cry'd down for weak and nought. Often they go no farther then the name of the Author; who, if he be of their party, or one they like, for his sake they will like all he has writ; if not, condemn and decry all without so much as reading; or if they do read, 'tis only to find faults, and see what exceptions they can take. For my part I cannot sufficiently wonder at a perverseness so unjust, and that such numbers of Men, and such men as are too often guilty, should forget, that Justice obliges us never to be so partial to one side, as not to reserve an ear for the other; or, at least, if we will not be just to others, we think we might be content to be just to ourselves. And yet our crossness is arriv'd to that height, that we make our selves of the plot to wrong our selves; for without doubt he wrongs himself, who refuses Reason when it is offered; and he who refuses to examine and weigh what is offered for Reason, for ought he knows, refuses Reason it self. In fine, if what is offered be truly Reason, he is unreasonable that rejects it; if it be fallacious, he who weighs it will discover the fallacy.

and settle himself both more strongly and more commendably in his first persuasion. Permit me therefore, for your own sake, to intreat you in this occasion, to divest your self of a Passion (if you be subject to it) as harmful to you as unjust in it self; and to read and consider what you are to judge of, before you judge. And, least my Prayers should be less prevalent then they ought, take it not amiss that I hinder you as much as I can from doing otherwise; and neither acquaint you with my Friends name, nor tell you whether he be Protestant or Sectary, of any, or of no Religion, or any thing concerning him; more, then that I will assure you he is an honest, and, hope you will confess, a Rational Man.

— **B**Ut, to leave this Matter, and come to the *Declaration*, of which you desire my Judgment: Peradventure I should do better once in my life to disobey you, and refuse to satisfy your curiosity, then meddle in a Case both tender in it self, and made more nice by the Passions of Men, in which there is no mean, whether they like or dislike. Where Men are so strongly byast, let Reason come never so near the mark, it shall never be thought a good cast. And how know I, whether you your self be wholly free from a disease so Epidemical? Which if it have seiz'd you, and that your opinion happen not to jump with mine, what can I expect, but that you will rather condemn me for unreasonable, then the persuasion which you have entertained? I must confess I have a strong aversion from meddling with things of this nature: And yet I cannot resolve with my self positively to disobey you. Wherefore, since you will needs have my judgment, take it with all the plainness I can; and this assurance to boot; that I desire you no farther to value it, then the Reasons I alledge shall recommend it.

People, say you, apprehend this *Declaration* dangerous to the Church: I wish you had mention'd what Reasons they bring of their apprehension; for, all the little Reason I have to consult with, makes me confidently expect the just contrary, and believe this *Declaration* will prove not onely safe, but advantagious to the Church. Her Enemies, say you, will increase by Liberty; I will not dispute that point, though I do not believe it; for I think constraint is no good way to make Friends: But this I will say, that the Church is too strongly settled to fear the opposition of any one party of her enemies. She had heretofore enemies enough to ruine her; but they neither did, nor could do harm till they were united; and when their Union brake, the Church was restored, and our calamities ceas'd. 'Tis not Enemies therefore the Church is to fear, but their Union. Consider, now, by what means that Union was made, which was so ruinous  
both

both to Church and State. Every body knows the principal, and perhaps only expedient, was Pretence of Liberty, and Ease from that Oppression of which every body complain'd, who was not permitted to worship God in his own way. 'Tis to this fatal pretence we owe our late Miseries. Not but that I well enough understand, Ambition and Revenge, and such bad ends were the true, though secret, movers of the Wheels of Rebellion: But, these durst not appear; and had they appeared in their native ugliness, would have been as certainly as justly abhorred. They lay hid under the disguise of Hypocritical sanctity; for, had the people once discovered their mistaken zeal was only made use of to serve the wicked ends of their Leaders, those Leaders would soon have wanted followers. But while they were cheated into a belief, that all was for Religion and the service of God, they forgot their Allegiance, and, in a frenzy of zeal, became Rebellious to appear Religious; neither was there any thing which could thus blind them, but the dazzling colour of oppression; otherwise, there is no Sect which does not as much hate his fellow sect, as they all do the Church: Nor is there a greater distance betwixt Sectary and Church-man, then betwixt Sectary and Sectary. But being all liable to the penalty of the Laws, they had one common pretext, which form'd them into an Union, and that Union undid us. 'Tis a plain case therefore, both, that they were not dangerous while they were divided, and that, pretence of oppression was the thing which united them. And, 'tis as plain, that the *Declaration* takes away this pretence, and leaves them no means to unite again, nor possibility to become dangerous: For, no Artifice can so far infatuate the minds of people as to make them fight for a Liberty which they enjoy without fighting. He that will now sollicite the people into a Faction, can no longer cheat them with the specious pretext of compassion, and make them believe he grieves for their oppression, and offers his person and fortunes for their relief, but must tell them plainly, I have a mind to become great or rich, and I would have you sacrifice your fortunes and quiet to my Passion, and turn Traytors to assist me: Which request when 'tis likely to succeed, I shall change my mind, and believe the *Declaration* dangerous to the Church. In the mean time, since nothing can endanger her, but the conspiracy of her Enemies; and this *Declaration* takes away the means of conspiring; 'tis a strange Logick which concludes danger in That which manifestly takes away all danger.

But her case will be found yet better, if we reflect, that her Enemies are not only hindred from all means of combining against her, but oblig'd, and that by the strongest Tye that can be, their own Interest,

terest, to joyn in her defence in case of danger. All Sects are now at liberty; if any one grow to that strength that it threaten any likelihood of danger, all the rest must for their own security joyn with the Church against it. For, the prevalency of any faction is as ruinous to every Sect as to the Church. The establishment of the *Classical* way would as much destroy the *Congregational*, as the *Discipline* of the Church; and the settlement of the *Congregational* is not more destructive to *Prelacy*, than it is to the *Classes*. And the same is to be said of all and every Sect, whereof if any one prevail, the rest are all involv'd in the common ruine; nor can the Rights of the Church be invaded without forfeit of Liberty; which, if not for hers, yet for their own sake, every body will maintain: So that now the Church can have but one Enemy, and all the rest Friends: whereas take away Liberty, and she has as many Enemies as Sects, and those, by desire of ease, common to all, dispos'd to combine against her. In which alone the true danger consists; for, divided Enemies are not to be fear'd.

For my part therefore, I am so far from apprehending any danger to the Church from the Liberty granted by the *Declaration*, that, on the contrary, I am strongly perswaded no expedient can be invented which conduces more to her safety. Nay, I am strangely mistaken if it bring her not those advantages at last which otherwise she might rather have desir'd than expected or hoped. For, if we may guess at the future by experience of the past, which is the surest way of judging, Those men who now divide from the Church, will after a while divide among themselves. So they did, when the ruine of the Church and State dissolv'd their Union; and so they will do again. They will divide and subdivide, world without end; and, when the Itch of Novelty, tickled at present by the artifice of men and allurements of things unusual, is a little allay'd, in all likelihood, quietly return from whence they came. The Aversion which all men have to Constraint, and Pleasure which most men find in Novelty, being a little past; People will begin calmly to reflect what advantage they receive from their Conventicles, which they may not have in their Parishes; and not find wherewith to satisfy themselves. A little more consideration will make them reflect to what purpose they are at the unnecessary charge of maintaining Preachers; when, as good, and peradventure better, are provided to their hands. Or, if they think they have gotten an abler man, they will in time consider, that half the expence which goes to the maintenance of a Conventicle, joyn'd to the Revenues settled on the Parish by Law, will furnish



furnish it with a man altogether as able and a great deal less chargeable. Such thoughts as these Time and Liberty will infuse into mens heads; and the consequences cannot but be infinitely advantageous to the *Church*. Our natural impatience will be apt to dislike a way of recovering People to their duty so long and tedious; For we wonderfully hate expectation, and would have things done as soon as thought on: But, the Old Proverb tells us, *The farthest way about is the nearest way home*; and I for my part conceive it, not only the nearest, but the onely way: sure I am it is the surest and most lasting of all others, and its firmness will make sufficient amends for its tediousness. For, People, who return by choice and judgement are hearty and unmovable; those who are forc'd in by fear are alwayes dissatisfy'd, and go out again as soon as the fear is past.

In the mean time the *Church* will be less full, say you, and less esteem'd. And less full for a short time she may be, though I believe not considerably; but, why less esteem'd? If she open her Doors and Arms to receive all who will come to her, is she to be blam'd, or those who refuse to enter? If men go to an Alehouse, when they should come to the Sermon, does any man lay the fault on the Preacher? When the King in the *Gospel* made a Feast, and invited his Guests, and they refus'd to come, was their unworthiness any blemish to the Kings goodness? Indeed, if it be universally suppos'd, that *Conventicles* have more learned, more painful, and more zealous Preachers, then *Parishes*; it may be suppos'd that People will be apt to follow them: But, as this cannot with justice be suppos'd, so, if it could, 'tis in the power of the Church to apply the proper remedy, and furnish the *Parishes* with abler men; at least the *Declaration* is no hindrance to her. But, the Church can provide no better than the small pittance allotted to the Minister will maintain; which is often so inconsiderable, that an able man will not accept of it. This is an inconvenience I confess, but not to be charg'd upon the *Declaration*. It has been long observ'd and long complain'd of before the *Declaration* was thought of; and is likely to continue till the charity of men grow greater. To say the truth, part of the fault is in the able man himself; whom no ability can sufficiently qualifie for his Function, if he make temporal advantages the end of it, and not the benefit of his flock. However, he has a fair advantage above the Sectary: For, he has at least a subsistence, though a poor one, establish'd by Law; and, if he can prevail for a voluntary Contribution towards the increase of his (often, truly, too small) stipend, he may freely do it, or any thing else which

which the Law and Vertue allows, for ought contain'd in the *Declaration*.

But, the people are stony hearted; and so unlikely to be induc'd to contribute more, that 'tis hard to prevent them from cheating him of part of his due. If this be so, there is no fear of Sectaries; for, they must want even subsistence, if they cannot prevail upon this very stony hearted people, and prevail to a greater contribution then would abundantly satisfy the lawful Pastor. He can live at least, independent of his Parishioners, and need not be beholding to them for what would have contented *S. Paul*, food and rayment, such as it is: If he need more, or better, methinks he may sooner dispose his Parish to the allowance of one penny, than the Sectary to the allowance of two, and perhaps more. And, if he fear that this may engage him to a blameable compliance, and oblige him to soothe their passions, and flatter their lusts, and dissemble their vices; I can assure him he is wonderfully mistaken. We make use of vicious people, but we esteem only the virtuous; and who will be more lov'd by his Parish, has no way but to appear more worthy of love, and owner of a more steady and more impartial Vertue. There is some reason to think the Sectaries not better men than others; and yet we see that the opinion of austerity, and severe uprightness is the bait with which they catch their Followers. Let the Lawful Pastor be thought more able and more diligent and more honest, and he will, without doubt, carry away the affections and purses of his Parish from the intruding Sectary; over whom he has at worst abundance of advantage: However, I am sure his case is no way made worse by the *Declaration*.

Farther, if you consider, who they are whom the Church is like to lose; you will find they are onely such, as 'tis not for her advantage to keep. She never had the hearts of those whose bodies she will lose; and I should think it is for the safety of the Church, that those, who come to her out of sense of their duty, be distinguished from such as comply only in consideration of their interest. Secret Enemies are of all others the most dangerous; for we can provide against mischiefs which we know, but those we know not overtake us without remedy. It seems to me wonderful strange, that it should be imagined disadvantageous to the Church, if she be not fill'd with people ill affected to her; and who come to find fault, and misinterpret every thing, and make others as much disgusted as themselves. The loss of these can, I think, no otherwise be call'd a loss, than the loss of a distemper, which in time might grow to a sickness: For, what can she expect from those who watch to do her



her all the harm they can? In Common-wealths 'twas never heard they desir'd to keep secret enemies among them, or complain'd of their going away: And I conceive the case is, the same with the Church, in whom 'twill be thought a complaint very extraordinary, that she is rid of her enemies. Her friends will not leave her, and, if her enemies do, I think she has reason to rejoyce that they have discover'd themselves, and lost the power of doing harm, which, under the colour of friendship, they might more easily have compas'd.

But, the Church will lose much of her power, How can that be said, when the *Declaration* is so far from injuring her in this point, that it expressly confirms the *Discipline* and *Government*, as well as *Doctrine* of the Church of England. Her *Rights* are all reserv'd, all *Preferments* are appropriated to her, and whatever *Church-power* belong'd to her before, remains intire. The execution indeed of coercive penalties on Offenders, which either wholly belongs to the Civil Magistrate, or is deriv'd from him, if the Civil Magistrate have thought fit to suspend, I do not think any man can with Justice complain: Though it be declared they shall not be punish'd (that is, with Civil and Lay Punishments) it is not declared that they are not Offenders; and if the Church can reclaim them to their duty, by admonitions or punishments, or any means properly Ecclesiastical, none hinders, and all will commend her. But when and where, and how far the Sword shall be us'd, belongs to him to judge, to whom the Sword belongs.

Yet, let us look a little nearer upon this Objection. The severe Laws, which were in force against Nonconformists before this *Declaration*, hindred not but that Conventicles still continued, and if they were disturb'd in one place, they set up in another: By little and little it came to a kind of connivence, and 'twas thought fitter to dissemble then punish them. So that I see little alteration brought in by the *Declaration*, but only this, that now it is known, they will not punish whom they thought it not convenient to punish before. And, all the Rules of good Government of which I have heard, require, that those penalties be taken away, which it is found expedient not to use: For, nothing can be more pernicious to a Commonwealth, then that people should be enured to disobey the Laws, and slight them with impunity. What they do in one case, they will by little and little accustom themselves to do, in more and all; and the Laws will lose at first their esteem, and afterwards their force, and all run into confusion. When Laws long disused are again enforced, people look upon them as a kind of oppression; and think them not Instruments of the publick good, but pretences made use of to

serve the Passions of private men, for whose sake the current of things is altered, to the prejudice perhaps, at leaft discontent, of the generality; then which, a more pernicious conceit cannot enter into the minds of the people. So that according to all Maxims of Policy, there should be no more Laws then Subjects should acknowledge by a constant obedience. Dormant Laws are a kind of Traps, into which, when people fall, they blame the Laws and not themselves; which as it is a dangerous conceit for Subjects to harbor, so it seems neither safe, nor honorable for Princes to give them the occasion.

But, not to be so wise, and enter into considerations, fitter for those who govern then those who obey; let us look only upon the present Case, which is no more but this: They did not punish before; They will not now. And betwixt these two, where is the difference? Their will was the only hinderance of punishment before, and so it is still; it was a hinderance before, and it is no more now. You will say perhaps I state the Case not fairly, and that now when publick and supream Authority is engaged for a suspension, it must not be said they will not, but they cannot punish. Be it so, if you please, and to make the Case as disadvantageous on my side as can be, let it be stated thus, They would not punish before, they cannot now. Betwixt these two there is indeed some difference in Logick, but none in Morality; for, want of Will does as much take away the effect, as want of Power. No action proceeds from Power alone, and unless Will be joyned to it, nothing will be done. All the Power in the World will never make me do that which I have not a Will to do; and to that Action, to which I have no Will, if the Power be taken away too, I know not why I should complain; for, all the consequence is, the effect cannot be, and that could never be before, because it is suppos'd I would not do it. I have power to kill the next man I meet, but if that power were taken from me, I think I were not ill dealt with: For, I shall never do it now, and if I never could do it, I should think my self not a jot the worse. Not that I would compare so extravagant a wickedness to the just use of a legal power, far be such a thought from me; but only shew how little that Power signifies, to the exercise of which, there is a Bar put by our Will.

At most therefore, the Power taken away is but such as before it was, not thought fit to use: But, in reality, there is none taken away; I mean, no Church-power. For, if we look into the Primitive times, we shall find the punishments of the Church were to admonish and rebuke, and if he continued incorrigibly obstinate, to excommunicate the Offender. This was both the greatest punishment she used,

used, and is indeed the greatest that can be used : For, it imports a forfeiture of the means of going to Heaven, which are to be had from the *Church* ; and that is incomparably beyond the forfeit of Temporal Goods, and ought be esteem'd so by all, who have any esteem of Eternal ones. However it be, her use was to shut her doors against sinners, but not to force them in. I for my part find no example of this in the pure times of Religion. Now, I conceive, there is not any part of this true Church-power touched by the *Declaration* ; she may free'y admonish still, and freely rebuke, and freely excommunicate, when she sees cause ; and preserve her Flock from the infection of ill men. If offenders continue obstinate and slight her *Censures*, she can do as the *Church* in pure times did, leave them to the Tribunal of God, and have no more to do with them. But, to force men to be good in sight of their Teeth, and bring them to Heaven whether they will or no, I never heard was part of the Churches power, and no rational man will ever believe it is or can be in the power of any Church, or any thing but the Grace of God to do ; and that not by force neither, but by sweetly and strongly changing the perverseness of their wills.

I hope by this time your fears of the *Churches interests*, are sufficiently quieted ; and that it appears to you as well as me, the *Declaration* is so far from being prejudicial to h.r., that it nothing diminishes her power, and increases much her safety, and promises those advantages which in likelihood could not be expected any other way. But yet it is thought, say you, it may contribute to the growth of *Papery*. Can you tell me, or why, or who they are that think so ? To begin with the first, We see the *Papists* neither do nor can do more since the *Declaration* then before. They prayed after their own way in private then, and always did, even in the times of greatest severity ; they can do no more now ; they writ before : they can but write now ; and the vigilance of the Officers employed in such things, renders their Printing as hazardous and chargeable as ever. They preach'd not in Publick before, neither can they now : So that I see no alteration either in what they do, or what is permitted them to do, which can afford a reason for any man to think things will go otherwise with them now, then they did before. If there be any difference, it is in relation to themselves purely, and not at all to others. They do now freely, and without fear, what they did before with more or less, as the times were more or less severe, but always with some : But they neither do, nor can do more now then what they always did. And I have said before, that it is not for the Interest either of *Church* or *State*, that people should be

accustom'd to live otherwise then the Laws prescribe; and in my opinion it is both far more safe, and far more honorable not to have such Laws, which Mercy or Expedience finds not fit to execute, then to keep them, and let Subjects freely disobey them.

Again, Who are they that think so? *Papists* cannot, and their Adversaries I suppose will not. Let us exemplifie in a *Protestant*, and see, if such a thought in him can consist with the opinion which he has of his *Church*. Is it not plainly to distrust and discredit her, if he think her not able to deal well enough with any who oppose her by the way of Reason? And for Violence, as the *Papists* are the most inconsiderable in point of number and strength; so, if they were otherwise, it appears by what has been said, that the *Declaration* makes it the Interest of all the rest, to joyn with the Church against them. It has been always thought and said, that the *Papists* thrive by working upon the discontents of unsatisfied spirits, and inveigling them into a liking of their own way, from the dislike of others; that they catch no Fish but in troubled Waters, and that their great Harvest was in the times of Discontent and Confusion. And can it be thought, that the calming of discontents, that is, taking away the Matter and Tools with which they work, should enable them to make better work of it? It is most certain, they cannot believe as they say, who say things so contrary; and, without doubt, no *Protestant* does in his heart own a fear so favorable to *Papists*, and disadvantageous to himself. And what I say of him, I say of all; for, the case is the same.

Then, for *Papists*, if they believe Liberty of Conscience advantageous to their Religion, why do they not practice it? We see they allow no Liberty where they can help it, and are wonderful jealous of all places, even of their own *Communion* in which the *Inquisition* is not established: So that, it is plain, their Governors, who are sure the wisest, judge Liberty so far from advancing the affairs, that they believe it the means to ruine them. I, but, you will say, the *Papists* allow no liberty to others where they are masters, but desire it themselves where they are not; and, certainly, not but for their advantage. Can you blame them? *Persecution* is no such pleasant thing, that men should desire it. But, what is this to the purpose? Does this desire of ease, which is common to them with all men, make *Liberty of Conscience* a jot advantageous to their Religion? To their persons indeed it may be, and is convenient, and for that they desire it; but our question is, what their Religion will get by it? They have long enjoyed a fair Liberty in *Holland*, and elsewhere, yet have not advanced, that I know, or increased their numbers beyond what they were when it was first granted.

But, consider a little. Preserving and Introducing Religion differ no otherwise then in continuance ; the things are the same, but one lasts, the other passes away ; or rather, they are but one thing, to which, when it has lasted a while, we give a new name, not from any change in it self, but by joyning the consideration of time to it ; for, Perseverance is nothing else but a lasting beginning. We were Created, we are Conserved by God : This Conservation of his is but a continued Creation, and what in us would be a perpetual repetition of the same act. In the like manner to preserve Religion, is nothing but always to introduce it ; our Language gives it another name, but the Thing is the same, and the same means are proper in both ; as, who will have the same effect, must provide the same cause. So that since it is acknowledged by their practice, that Liberty is no good way to preserve their Religion, it cannot be believed by them a good way to introduce it ; and the advantage which they seek from Liberty, is to their Persons, not their Religion : And peradventure the natural propension which all men have to ease, makes them prefer their Personal Interest to that of their Religion ; For, otherwise, if Liberty could introduce their Religion, it could preserve it too, which you see they think it will not. Wherefore, if neither *Papists* nor their Adversaries can think *Liberty* advantageous to *Popery*, what can I think, but that those fears are more pretended then real ?

But, let them tell me, who are thus jealous of the increase of *Popery*, which way the *Declaration* contributes to their *Jealousies* ? I see there is a difference made betwixt them and others, who being allow'd *Publick Congregations*, *Papists* are confin'd to their private houses ; And every body may see that this is to prevent all suspicion of danger, and possibility of being cheated by them, who are not permitted so much as to expose their ware. Nevertheless we see their Religion has been publickly exercis'd a good space in the *Queens Chappel*, and at all times in *Embassadors*. Many go thither, as they do to the Jews, to see what's done ; and when they have satisfi'd their curiosity, come out again as good *Protestants* as they went in. So that, though I see the *Declaration* is extraordinary careful of them, I do not see they are extraordinary dangerous. But to dispatch this objection in short. Publick endeavors to seduce the people are forbidden to *Papists* by this very *Declaration*, and private ones no severity could ever yet prevent. Nay, severity was the very thing which has rendred those private endeavors more successful. For, when other people were dissatisfi'd and apt to be wrought upon

upon, and they, by pretending the fairest testimony of a good conscience, suffering for it, could incline those easily mov'd souls first to compassion and then to favour, they must needs be better enabled to work upon them, and more likely to prevail, then when, without any assistance from the affection of men, they have nothing but bare reason to work with. In which who thinks they will be able to do any great matter, must withal think they have more reason to produce, then any, who are not of their own way, does truly think they have.

Upon the whole I conceive that, were there no other reason but the Judgement of that Authority from whence it came, both I and all good subjects with me, were oblig'd to think the *Declaration* seasonable and fitting: But truly were there no Authority at all for it, my little reason has alwayes perswaded me it was an expedient so usefull, both to Church and State, that I have alwayes wish'd it, and was very glad to see it. And, if I may speak my thoughts freely, I am strongly inclin'd to fear, that these suspicious jealousies, with which some entertain it, are industriously somented by those who are sorry to see things in so good a condition, as this *Declaration* is like to put them. Not but that I believe many speak against it with an innocent zeal and mistaken well-meaning; and these, I doubt not, will soon perceive their mistake, and as soon rectifie it: But I fear those factious spirits, which have been so fatal in our late calamities, and so busie ever since, have too great an influence upon these dissatisfactions. We see the Mole-hills of discontent, but I doubt we see not the Moles who cast them up. 'Twas the pretence of Religion which rais'd the last War, and the same pretence might raise another. This pretence is now quite taken away, and those who would embroil things again, and profit by the disorder, can no longer hope for the same success in tampering with a people not exasperated, or dispos'd for factious impressions. And 'tis here I fear the *Shoe* truly wrings. A party can no longer be rais'd by pretence of zeal, and ease from the Antichristian burthens; and God send the true reason why people are unquiet now, be not, because they foresee they cannot but be quiet hereafter; and that they therefore cry out upon the great *Diana* of the *Epheians*, the Church is in danger and Popery at hand, because the gainful Trade is like to cease. 'Tis not that I believe, all who say such things, even those who have been actually engag'd against the King, are guilty of such thoughts. I am firmly perswaded the generality was even, at worst, rather seduced than wicked; and I see all sorts of *persuasions* entertain the *Declaration* with joy and gratitude. But, as their blind  
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zeal was then stir'd up, by secret Engineers, to compass those ends which they never intended: so, I now fear, the suspicions and jealousies, we see, have secret causes, which pretend those fears to cover other designs.

For, in truth, the odness of the whispers seems to me strangely suspicious. The *Church*, say they, loses her power, the very sins of Government; if she cannot, when she pleases, punish those who desert her: As if Protestants did not know, and in the *Oath of Supremacy* swear, that Coactive Power belongs to the Civil Magistrate, who, if he please to suspend it, uses but his own right, and is accountable to none but God. They forget, that to say, the King is oblig'd to draw his Sword, when ever the Church thinks fit, is a *Papish Doctrine*, and one of the worst of them, justly and strongly oppos'd by all Reform'd Churches. There are among the Papists who would have Princes subject to the Pope, and oblig'd at the Popes beck to use his Sword, as the Pope would have them. But, the Reformed have alwayes so much detested it, that 'tis a very suspicious care of the Church, which makes men joyn with Papists to oppose the Reformation. The *Declaration* takes away no Church-Power from the Church; on the contrary preserves and expressly confirms it: But, if the King declares how he pleases to use his own Power, 'tis a very preposterous affection to the Church, which makes men backward to receive his Commands with that dutiful submission good subjects owe to them. Care of the Church, methinks, should not be the true cause (how much soever it be the pretence) to asperse the Church with the most extravagant and most pernicious Doctrine to be found among the Papists themselves; and that but some neither, for, others disclaim it. For instead of pope, or Church of *Rome*, say Church of *England*, and the Doctrine is the same.

Again, can it be thought care of the Church, which causes another whisper altogether as extravagant; That this Liberty will dissolve the affection which has alwayes been betwixt Church and State; and weaken both by taking away the good intelligence which has made them the strongest supports to one another. Strange care! which would make it be thought she cleaves to the State not for duty but Interest: which would take away the glory of her past sufferings, and possess people she suffer'd not for Allegiance but Policy, in chusing the side which by mistake she thought would prove the stronger, and cared not whether it were the juster. Only when she found her self deceiv'd, and that she could not prevent falling in the common ruin of her party, she was willing to be thought at least not to deserve her fall, and charge the calamities she could not avoid, rather upon Allegiance than folly. Are these scandalous imputations likely to proceed from love to the Church? And yet some, whose love to the Church cannot be doubted, whisper these things: which makes me suspect they see not what  
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is at bottom, and are deceiv'd by some whose meaning is not so good as theirs; which, lest it should come to be discovered, they disguise with the old Mask, fear of Popery. One would think we had too often and too sadly been cheated; to have that wheedle pass upon us again; and I fear they are too much put to it to invent specious pretexts of dissatisfaction, who venture to do that which no Jugler ever would; shew the same trick twice.

But yet, why should *Papists* have any liberty at all? Those who say this; I must tell them freely, consult more their own fears, than the *Kings* honour. Give the Devil his due, the *Papists* fought for the King, and were ruin'd for him, and treated as enemies by all, who were enemies to him, when a *Toleration* of those who had been his enemies, was thought convenient, was it honourable for him to leave out only those who had been his friends? Or if they would have him sacrifice his honour to their jealousies, was it prudent and according to the Maxims of good Government, to punish Loyalty, and make it be thought, the way to obtain favours from the King, is to be his enemy? How far Zeal, and Zeal not according to knowledge may excuse conceits so preposterous I know not, but I know they are strangely preposterous.

And, now you have my Judgment in the Point you proposed, let me ask you what it, or that of any private man is worth, in a case wherein the Judgment of the King, and that Wisdom which assists him in the Government of the Nation, has already interposed? Resolutions of this nature depend on the knowledge of many things whereof private men are ignorant; and it is fit they should be so. Now, in things, wherein we are ignorant, I conceive we neither have nor can have other Light to guide our Judgments, but the knowledge of those who understand them. When that is declared, as in this case it is, if we do not judge as they do, without doubt there is some (perhaps secret, but yet) perverse affection which hinders us; for, all the Reason that can be is on that side. And I must confess, I am not satisfied, whether, of that Liberty which some men take to censure the Actions of *Kings*, the arrogance or folly be greater. For, it is a plain case, that private men are utterly unacquainted with the mysteries of State, and the knowledge of those things which are necessary to the framing such Resolutions. *Kings*, and those whose service they are pleased to use, only know them. Again, though every member be interested in the good of the whole, yet none comparably to the Head. The obscurity of a private condition may secure a particular man from the calamity of a publick Revolution; or he may convey himself and his fortune into a Foreign Countrey, and live with safety: But, *Kings*, as they have more to lose, so they are sure to lose it, unless the Commonwealth do well. A private man may scape unregarded, but a King is sure to be aim'd at by all; nor has he any security of the advantages which his condition gives him, but the publick good. Wherefore, when He, who better knows what is for the publick good than we can, and is more concerned in it than we can be, declares this or that to be for the publick good: He, who entertains his Judgment with suspicious doubts, and thinks he sees more than the King, or could order things better, is in my opinion full as foolish as stubborn. I know not how far such Foreign Topics may be entertained; but, sure I am, they conclude so strongly, that, in cases where our private Passions are not concern'd, every body will freely acknowledge, that the Rule and only Rule of a private mans judgment in affairs of State, is the judgment of his Prince; and, if we do not apply that Rule to our present Case, I fear our Passion too evidently overflows our Reason.

